

Nazareth ISD

District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)

2026-2031

During of the 84th Legislative Session, HB 1842 was passed in order to provide more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to utilize the exemptions in Education Law that charter schools currently are entitled to. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to create a plan based on the needs of our students and community that will remain in effect for the next five years (2026-2031).

Timeline of Actions to Meet Requirements:

Wednesday, April 22, 2026	SBDM and Assigned Committee meet to review Revised Innovation Plan for 2026-2031 to prepare a renewal plan
Wednesday, May 6, 2026	SBDM and Assigned Committee meet to develop renewal plan
Wednesday, July 1, 2026	Revised Innovation Plan for 2026-2031 posted on district website for 30 days prior to BOE consideration of approval
Thursday, July 9, 2026	Board notification to the commissioner of education of the board's intention to vote on the renewal of the DOI plan with link to proposed plan
Wednesday, August 5, 2026	SBDM Public Meeting for consideration of approval of Renewal of District of Innovation Plan for 2026-2031 to recommend to BOE with SBDM's majority approval of final version
Wednesday, August 12, 2026	Public Comment and BOE review (1 st Reading) of proposed SBDM Renewal as District of Innovation Plan for 2026-2031
Wednesday, August 26, 2026	BOE review (2 nd Reading) and consider adoption of proposed SBDM Revised Innovation Plan for 2026-2031 and the continued designation of Nazareth ISD as District of Innovation.
By Friday, September 4, 2026	Board notification to the commissioner of education of the board's renewal of the DOI Plan with a link to the approved plan.
Tuesday, September 8, 2026	Nazareth ISD District of Innovation Plan for 2021-2026 expires
Wed, September 9, 2026	Nazareth ISD District of Innovation Plan for 2026-2031 will go into effect

INNOVATIONS:

Nazareth ISD seeks exemption from the following Texas Education Code provisions:

1. SBDM Planning and Decision-Making Process	
Tex. Educ. Code § 11.1511(b)(5)	
Innovation: TEC 11.1511(b)(5): [The Board shall] adopt a policy to establish a district- and campus-level planning and decision-making process as required under Section 11.251. The district proposes exemption from the requirement to establish a district- and campus-level planning and decision-making process. Rationale/Benefit: The District believes local interests will be best served by not being required to create committees with specific required representatives as set forth in TEC 11.251. TEC sets forth limitations and requirements for the selection of committee members that make it difficult to create and maintain an effective committee based upon local demographics and needs. The District believes its local interests will be best served by having the ability to approve plans that do not have to be approved annually.	

2. SBDM Planning and Decision-Making Process	
Tex. Educ. Code § 11.251	
Innovation: TEC 11.251 currently states that the school board shall adopt a policy to involve professional staff of the district, parents, and community members in the establishment of a district and campus-level planning entity. The district will continue to create and utilize a committee; however, local control of the composition of the committee will encourage genuine involvement among the staff and community. In this proposal, a person will be permitted to hold more than one representative role. Rationale/Benefit: The District believes local interests will be best served by not being required to create committees with specific required representatives. This statute sets forth limitations and requirements for the selection of committee members that make it difficult to create and maintain an effective committee based upon local demographics and needs. The District believes its local interest will be best served by having the ability to approve plans that do not have to be approved annually.	

3. District Improvement Plan

Tex. Educ. Code § 11.252

Innovation:

TEC 11.252 currently states that each school district shall have a district improvement plan that is developed, evaluated, and revised annually and that must include certain provisions and requirements. The district will continue to create and utilize a district improvement plan, however, local control of the composition of the plan will encourage genuine involvement among the staff and community to create a living document that truly meets the needs of our unique district.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District believes flexibility in its District-Level Planning and Decision Making will enable the District to create a plan that is localized and tailored to most efficiently and effectively promote successful learning, as well as meaningful community participation and parental involvement.

The District believes its local interest will be best served by having the ability to approve plans that do not have to be approved annually.

4. Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.0031

Innovation:

TEX 21.0031 prohibits districts from terminating an employee whose contract is void because the employee failed to renew or extend the employee's certificate or permit if the employee requested an extension from SBEC or takes measures to remedy the voided contract. The district proposes the ability to terminate any employee whose contract lapses and is void without a hearing or unnecessary procedures.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District believes that a loss of a certificate means a loss of qualifications and should not require the time and cost of a hearing to terminate that employee. The District desires to include in its employment contracts that a loss of certification voids the contract immediately. This will prevent unnecessary expenditures on hearings when certification is required for a position. This flexibility will enable the District to preserve money and maintain fiscal responsibility while making it easier to release unqualified employees.

5. Presentation and Recording of Certificates

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.053

Innovation:

The District desires the flexibility to hire teachers on a temporary basis who are not certified, consistent with its District of Innovation Plan, but cannot do so if not exempt from the law that prohibits their payment.

Rationale/Benefit:

This statute, as written, directs that a substitute teacher could not teach without a certificate, and certainly could not get paid. Moreover, an educator whose certificate has lapsed would not be eligible to work for the district in a nonteaching job, because the law prohibits their payment for “work done.”

6. Probationary Contracts

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.102

Innovation:

Currently, teachers who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year on a probationary contract. This limited period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine a teacher’s success in the classroom. Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit the district the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to (five) years for certified educators. This gives the employee greater opportunity to prove they should receive a term contract. The District reserves the right to offer a term contract prior to the five years of working under a probationary contract.

Rationale/Benefit:

By giving the District up to five years to determine if an employee should receive a term contract, it gives the District more flexibility to retain successful educators and avoids a rush to judgment that could result in the educator losing the opportunity to continue with the District. Currently, the District gives a short leash to probationary contract teachers who are required to go to a term contract under this law, giving them a greater opportunity to prove themselves.

7. Probationary Contract: Termination

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.103

Innovation:

Because the District desires to give employees the entire instructional year to showcase their success, the District proposes an innovation that will allow it to vote and deliver its notice of termination 10 days following the last day of instruction. This provides the employee more time to succeed. The District also believes delivering notice via certified mail, return receipt requested, is always less disruptive to the educational environment than hand delivery on the campus.

Rationale/Benefit:

The decision to terminate an employee before the last day of instruction disrupts the educational environment, which is not in the best interest of successful instruction.

8. Return to Probationary Status

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.106

Innovation:

The District believes that it should be able to contract with its personnel in a manner that best serves the District. If an employee is to the point of potential termination or nonrenewal, the District should be able to return the teacher to a probationary contract. There should not be unnecessary requirements like telling the teacher their right to counsel, as they always have the right to counsel, or giving them three business days to make a decision.

Rationale/Benefit:

A term contract is for a term of years, not tenure or in perpetuity. Once that term of years is up, the District should be able to offer a teacher whatever type of contract it believes is in the best interest of the District. Educators should not be denigrated by requiring the Board to give the teacher written notice that the board of trustees of the school district has proposed discharge, termination, or nonrenewal.

9. Appraisal of Certain Administrators

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.354

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 21.354(d). The District believes it is in the best interest of the District to create its own appraisal schedule for administrators and not punish administrators who were not appraised within 15 months.

Rationale/Benefit:

If an administrator is not appraised within 15 months it is due to the District's omission, not the employee, and it is unfair not to pay the employee. The District should have the independence to determine how it spends its funds.

10. Evaluation of School Counselors

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.356

Innovation:

The District exempts out of TEC 21.356. The District believes it is in the best interest of the District to create its own evaluation instrument for the counselor.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District would have the option to develop a counselor evaluation system that fits the needs and goals of NISD that best reflects our school and community.

11. Teacher Contract Days

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.401

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 21.401. The District believes it should be permitted to contract with its employees on terms that best meet the local needs of the District while permitting the District to remain competitive in its retention and recruitment of quality educators. With a change to minutes from days for students, instruction can be completed in fewer "days." The District does not plan to utilize any reduction in pay for fewer days, however.

Rationale/Benefit:

This change permits the District to adjust contracts to meet the position or needs of both the District and employees.

12.Planning and Preparation Time

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.404

Innovation:

Under TEC 21.404, each classroom teacher is entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning, and during a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity. The District exempts out of section 21.404 and permits the District to adjust its planning periods for teachers as best meets the needs of students.

Rationale/Benefit:

We are a small district with a lot of “singleton” classes. If the need arises, the District intends to offer select teachers who mutually agree to forego their planning period the opportunity to teach additional classes for a stipend. This will eliminate the need for extra teachers, provide greater financial benefits for select teachers, and permit students to have access to more offerings for instruction.

13.Leave of Absence for Temporary Disability

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.409

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 21.409 and will let employees continue to utilize leave under the FMLA and, if appropriate the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District believes employees already have available leave under the FMLA and the ADA, so this is duplicative and unnecessary.

14.Staff Development Requirements

Tex. Educ. Code § 21.451

Innovation:

The District opts out of section 21.451 to the extent there are requirements for the District with respect to staff development.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District believes staff development best serves the District by local determination of the needs of the campuses and students.

15. Inter-District Transfers	
Tex. Educ. Code § 25.036	FDA(LEGAL)(LOCAL)
Innovation: The District opts out of section 25.036 to the extent it requires an inter-district transfer to be for a period of one full school year. Rationale/Benefit: The district maintains a transfer policy under FDA (local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of one year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. At times, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program or expulsion. In addition, the student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standards. In these rare cases, the district seeks exemption from the one-year transfer commitment.	

16. First Day of Instruction	
Tex. Educ. Code § 25.0811	
Innovation: The District exempts out of section 25.0811. The District shall determine its first date of instruction based upon what is in the best interest of its students, taking into consideration staffing, budget, and the local needs of the District. To meet local and community needs, this plan would allow a more balanced number of instructional days per semester and use more instructional time prior to the state assessments given in April. Rationale/Benefit: The District will look at the budgetary implications, staffing, and what is in the best interest of the District and its students to determine its policies regarding first date of instruction.	

17. Last Day of School

Tex. Educ. Code § 25.0811

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 25.0812. The District shall determine its last date of instruction based upon what is in the best interest of its students, taking into consideration staffing, budget, and the local needs of the District. With minute requirements at 75,600 and the state assessments given in April, it might be possible to finish the school year prior to May 15.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District will look at the budgetary implications, staffing, and what is in the best interest of the District and its students to determine its policies regarding last date of instruction.

18. School Day Interruptions

Tex. Educ. Code § 25.083

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 25.083. The District shall determine when disruptions are appropriate and/or necessary based upon local needs. Removals will be addressed locally through policy.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District will “disrupt” instruction as needed and warranted and not based upon a state standard. Students needing remediation will be addressed by local policy.

19. Student/Teacher Ratio

Tex. Educ. Code § 25.111

EEB(LEGAL)

Innovation:

Except as provided by Section 25.112, each school district must employ a sufficient number of teachers certified under Subchapter B, Chapter 21, to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance.

The District exempts out of section 25.111 and will determine its staffing based upon the course, the teacher, the staff available, the budget, and whatever other facts necessary to provide a quality education to its students.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District will provide reasonable and adequate staff and maintain a teacher-to-student ratio that will provide quality education.

20. Class Size

Tex. Educ. Code § 25.112

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 25.112 and will determine its staffing based upon the course, the teacher, the staff available, the budget, and whatever other facts necessary to provide a quality education to its students.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District will provide reasonable and adequate staff and maintain a teacher-to-student ratio that will provide quality education.

21. Notice of Class Size

Tex. Educ. Code § 25.113

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 25.113 and will determine its staffing based upon the course, the teacher, the staff available, the budget, and whatever other facts necessary to provide a quality education to its students. Because the district has exempted out of sections 25.111 and 25.112, notice will not be necessary.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District will provide reasonable and adequate staff and maintain a teacher-to-student ratio that will provide quality education.

22. Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

Tex. Educ. Code § 25.114

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 25.114 and will determine its staffing based upon the course, the teacher, the staff available, the budget, and whatever other facts necessary to provide a quality and safe education to its students.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District will provide reasonable and adequate staff and maintain a teacher-to-student ratio that will provide quality and safe education.

23.Prohibition on Certain Discrimination in Student Dress or Grooming Policy

Tex. Educ. Code § 25.902

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 25.902 and will apply and follow the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution, as well as Title VI, and not discriminate based on race or any protected characteristic.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District will protect student expression consistent with the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution and other state or federal law.

24.Required Disclosure Regarding Instructional Plan

Tex. Educ. Code § 26.0062

Innovation:

The District exempts out of section 26.0062. Teachers shall not be under the burden of publishing their instructional plans or course syllabi before the semester begins.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District hires teachers sometimes days before school begins and not every teacher comes with a fully completed set of instructional plans and course syllabus.

Moreover, if a teacher is assigned a different course to teach just before the first day (or after) it is not possible always to have an instructional plan or course syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

25.Notification of Certain High School Graduation Requirements

Tex. Educ. Code § 28.02123

Innovation:

The District exempts section 28.02123 and shall communicate information about high school graduation requirements in an appropriate manner as the district deems best for the district.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District believes it can determine how and what to communicate with respect to graduation requirements.

26.Home-Schooled Student Merit Scholarship and AP Testing

Tex. Educ. Code § 29.916

Innovation:

The District exempts itself from section 29.916 and shall not permit home-schooled children to take college placement tests at the district.

Rationale/Benefit:

Because home school students are not subject to school discipline, the District will not permit them to participate with its students in placement testing.

27.School Counselors; General Duties

Tex. Educ. Code § 33.006

Innovation:

The District exempts itself from section 31.006 and shall determine the duties of its counselors and what percentage, if any, will be required from the counselor to complete their duties.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District shall determine the duties of its employees.

28.Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Tex. Educ. Code § 38.018

Innovation:

The District exempts itself from section 38.018 and shall determine its method for creating its own cardiac emergency response plan.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District shall prepare its own cardiac emergency response plan.

29.Annual Physical Fitness Assessment

Tex. Educ. Code § 38.101

Innovation:

The District exempts itself from section 38.101 and shall determine appropriate assessment for its student's physical fitness.

Rationale/Benefit:

The District shall determine how to assess its student's fitness.

30. Depository Contract	
Tex. Educ. Code § 38.101	BDAE(LEGAL)
Innovation: The District exempts itself from section 45.205 and shall contract with a depository bank that best meets the needs of the District. Small schools in small communities do not have many choices in banks or financial institutes that are near to the school or in the school district. By gaining exemptions from these statutes, throughout the term of the District of Innovation Plan, Nazareth ISD would have the flexibility to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is not operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for proposal. Rationale/Benefit: This would lessen the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there are no other banking institutions within district boundaries available to submit a proposal for the district's business. In addition, this would further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to alter their district deposit instructions and afford district flexibility with respect to local banking relationships.	